

## PUERTO RICO LEGISLATION DIVIDES SENATE MAJORITY.

**Conflict Precipitated at a Secret Conference to Consider a Compromise.**

**Members Who Favor Evading the Issue Met With a Threat by Foraker to Introduce a Free Trade Measure If Present One Is Not Acted Upon.**

Washington, March 12.—The Senate Chamber and adjoining committee rooms to-day were the scene of a conflict of opinion which found no place in the Congressional Record. The basis of the disagreement was Senator Foraker's bill providing a form of government for the Island of Puerto Rico, and only Republican Senators participated in it.

The controversy grew out of the efforts to have the bill amended. There are some Senators who hold that legislation for Puerto Rico, for the present at least, should be confined to providing for the immediate needs of the inhabitants of Puerto Rico, and not include efforts to establish a form of government. The Senators generally believe that Puerto Rico should receive no favors in the way of tariff reduction, and are content to allow the present tariff rates to continue until they put it there is more time and the Senate is better prepared for the despatched consideration of the question. Their idea is to leave the Island in the control of the War Department.

**Foraker's Threat.**  
Senator Foraker is among the friends of the pending bill, and a chairman of the Puerto Rican Committee, met the proposal of inactivity with a declaration that if it was persisted in he would not only drag the bill now before the Senate entirely but would introduce a substitute for it, a measure providing for a substantial recognition of the Island as a Territory, giving it all the rights and all the privileges and immunities of such Territories as Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona—not only making the Puerto Rican people full-fledged citizens of the United States but establishing complete free trade between the Island and the United States proper.

This further purpose, as it is outlined, is to introduce it as an amendment to the bill to be introduced in the Senate, and compromise some of them have been advised of the various plans under consideration. It was decided to postpone the bill indefinitely, and to abandon it as soon as the Senate had come to a general understanding as to the best course to be pursued.

When word reached the House as to the possible course of the Senate on the Puerto Rican bill, Senator Foraker and others of the Ways and Means Committee said that the bill would be introduced without the report of any conference or communication with members of the House, and considerable doubt was expressed as to whether the bill could be introduced with such radical changes as those suggested.

**House Sentiment.**  
It appears that while members of the House of Representatives, and particularly of Great Britain, are in this question, but the indications point to the fact that the adoption of the Senate's amendment will result in Great Britain's refusal to further recognize the Island.

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"If the American people, as certain English correspondents pretend, were anxious about our efforts to include in a public endorsement with England in order to group the latter's entrenched hand in the new treaty undeniably means imminent war with Great Britain," said Mr. Moody, who then took active part in the House debate, "the proposition up to yesterday was to combine the House Bill with the Senate's, and territorial bill, along with the duties on goods entering Puerto Rico and retaining the 10 per cent rate on goods entering the United States." This, he said, was a profitable understanding with England.

**London Press Aroused.**  
London, March 12.—The Daily News, in an editorial dealing with the Hay-Pauncefote crisis, has asserted that the bill would be accepted by the House of Commons.

The Daily News' editor, Mr. George King, concurred with Mr. Moody that the changed temper of the House would lead to the acceptance of a free trade measure if the Senate made it so.

The Daily Chronicle says:

"We hope Lord Salisbury will not yield. We are for a good understanding with America, but we do not believe it will be attained by concealing important interests."

**SUZERAIN'S RESOLUTION.**  
Washington, March 12—Representative Sulzer of New York to-day introduced the following resolution:

"Resolved, That the Secretary of War is hereby directed to inform the House of Representatives as early as possible what fortifications Great Britain is erecting, constructing and completing along the northern frontier of the United States, especially at Puget Sound and other places on the Pacific Ocean, contiguous to the State of Washington and the District of Alaska."

**PUERTO RICAN CITIZENS PETITION FOR FREE TRADE.**

**Request Congress to Adopt An Internal Revenue Measure, Which Would Provide Ample Funds—Immediate Relief Urged by All Classes.**

San Juan, Puerto Rico, March 12.—The planters, merchants and manufacturers of Puerto Rico mailed to Congress yesterday the following statement:

"We, the undersigned, beg to submit to your earnest consideration the following views as to the financial policy of Puerto Rico. We note with regret the principle enunciated by certain speakers in the lower house of Congress, that a tariff between Puerto Rico and the United States is the proper method of raising revenues for this Island. To this we are unchangeably opposed for the following reasons:

"1. Because taxation on our exports means an embargo on our foreign commerce.

"2. Because curtailment of our commerce with the United States would lock up our products here and prevent us from gaining our legitimate proportion of profit on our productions.

"3. We can never become independent financially if forced to trade exclusively with our mother country, and in that case we cannot gain wealth.

"Do not mistake the proposed 15 per cent of the Dingley rates for a reasonable rate. It is a fact that no class of goods produced here from leaf tobacco will be taxed less than 15 ad valorem, and that is one of the most important classes of goods. We cannot see that this class will be taxed 10 per cent ad valorem under the bill adopted by the House of Representatives."

"If this is not an embargo on our trade, what can it be called?

"We earnestly ask for free trade, believing that with a sufficient arrangement of production between the two countries the United States will be more than gained. The United States will for many years supply our 1,000,000 people with their manufactured products. In general we recognize the fact that a revenue to support the regular expenses of government is necessary, but we are of the opinion that better methods for raising that revenue will be by internal taxation, and for the following reasons:

"Because by that system no restriction will be placed on our commerce with the United States.

"2. Because the adoption of that system will be an impediment to the entry of the United States into the operation here as it is in the rest of the Americas.

"3. Considering the amount of revenue needed for this Island, we beg to submit the following calculations, which, after due consideration, we consider to be correct:

"Rum, 15,000 gallons, at \$1,000,000, excise, \$200,000; sugar, 120,000 bushels, at \$200,000, works out at \$42,000; total, \$22,000.

"To estimate the entire special license tax nominally \$1,000. This will give us a total revenue of \$22,000. One-third of that equals about \$7,333.33, a fair estimate of the amount to be derived from the administration of the bill, add for interest and sinking fund on bonds to be issued \$3,000, total required, \$10,000.

"With this, the bill, the United States would be compelled to pay annually from customs duties on goods coming here from foreign countries, and by necessary law, to require Puerto Rico to issue \$200,000 of forty-year, four-cent bonds the above will provide for them. For interest, sinking and for sinking funds, \$2,000.

"Therefore, we infer that it will be unnecessary to adopt for this Island the full system of internal taxation. One-third of those rates will give ample receipts to cover all the above. Puerto Rico has no bonded or other debts. Therefore, no new bonds will be issued for external improvements would be conservative.

"We call your attention to the fact that it is the custom of all countries to make internal improvements by a system of bonded indebtedness which divides the cost among succeeding generations. We do not desire to do this, but the cost of improvements placed on us solely. If it must be so, then we ask that it be done by a system of internal taxation that will not be a burden on our commerce with the States of the American Union and that will not starve us.

"The fact cannot be disputed that our

## BRITAIN SHOWS A FIRM FRONT.

If Senate Tampers With Hay-Pauncefote Treaty Crisis May Come.

### CLAYTON-BULWER AGREEMENT.

England Probably Would Refuse to Further Consider Its Modification—French View of Anglo-American Entente.

London, March 12.—No communications have passed between Washington and London in regard to the Nicaragua Canal treaty, and the reports cabled here to Lord Pauncefote, the British Ambassador at Washington, had sent telegrams to the Foreign Office bearing on this subject, are incorrect.

The Associated Press is authorized to say that the attitude of the British Government is, that, having agreed to all of Senator Hay's requests without asking for a quid pro quo, it can do nothing more, nor express any opinion until new requests are made through the same channel. As nothing of the kind had been done, no notice could be taken of the senatorial action.

It appears that Lord Salisbury has thus directed no attention to the matter. The United States' Ambassador to London, Mr. Edward L. Godwin, has sent telegrams to the Foreign Office bearing on this subject, are incorrect.

Some of the Senators at the conference expressed the opinion that an agreement was reached to render the Senate's bill, and the passage of the Puerto Rican bill, somewhat easier.

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**House Sentiment.**

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Notwithstanding these statements, however, it appears that while members of the House of Representatives, and particularly of Great Britain, are in this question, but the indications point to the fact that the adoption of the Senate's amendment will result in Great Britain's refusal to further recognize the Island.

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